

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 EB-07 OMB-01 /066 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5165
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 9458

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJ: POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS DRAG ON

REF: ROME 9038

SUMMARY: NO CLEAR CONCLUSION IS IN SIGHT FOR THE LENGTHY
POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS AMINED AT AN INTERPARTY AGREEMENT
ON THE CONTENT OF THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM.
ALTHOUGH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) AGREED LAST WEEK
TO THE LEFT PARTIES' POLITICAL DEMAND FOR "COLLEGIAL"
MEETINGS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DC AND THE FIVE
ABSTAINING PARTIES, SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS ON THE ELEMENTS
OF AN AGREEMENT STILL APPEARS TO BE LACKING. A NEW ROUND
OF TECHNICAL BILATERAL MEETINGS BEGINS THIS WEEK (IN
AN ATMOSPHERE CHARGED BY HEIGHTENED TENSIONS AS A RESULT
OF THE SENATE'S UNEXPECTED DEFEAT OF THE ABORTION BILL
ON JUN 7), AND NO DATE HAS YET BEEN SET FOR THE
FIRST COLLEGIAL MEETING. WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS SEEMINGLY
BOGGED DOWN, RENEWED ATTENTION IS BEING GIVEN BY PARTY
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LEADERS TO THE POLITICAL ELEMENTS OF AN EVENTUAL ACCORD.
THE DC HOPES TO BE ABLE TO RESIST ANY CHANGE IN THE
COMPOSITION OF THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT; THE PCI SEEKS
SOME FORM OF A POLITICAL "GUARANTEE" TO ASSURE COM-
PLIANCE WITH A PROGRAM AGREEMENT; WHILE THE PSI IS
ARGUING FOR NO LESS THAN THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERN-
MENT. END SUMMARY.

1. NO CLEAR END IS IN SIGHT FOR THE PROTRACTED POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT REACHING AN INTER-PARTY AGREEMENT ON THE CONTENT OF THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. AT THE END OF LAST WEEK, IT APPEARED THAT THE DC DIRECTORATE HAD BROKEN A LOGJAM BY ACCEPTING THE LEFT PARTIES' DEMAND FOR A "COLLEGIAL" MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DC AND THE ABSTENTION PARTIES TO WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT. THE SHIFT FROM THE BILATERAL TO "COLLEGIAL" FORMAT--IN WHICH ALL SIX PARTIES ARE GATHERED AROUND ONE TABLE--WOULD GRAPHICALLY EMPHASIZE THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF A PROGRAM ACCORD IN WHICH THE PCI IS FORMALLY INCLUDED.

2. A QUICK ROUND OF PREPARATORY BILATERAL PARTY MEETINGS ON JUNE 2 AND 3, HOWEVER, REVEALED THAT MANY DIFFERENCES STILL EXIST OVER THE PROGRAM AS WELL AS OVER HOW THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF AN AGREEMENT SHOULD BE MANIFESTED. NO DATE HAS THEREFORE YET BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR A COLLEGIAL MEETING. IF SUFFICIENT PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN BILATERAL TECHNICAL TALKS THIS WEEK, A COLLEGIAL MEETING COULD BE HELD AROUND THE MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK. FEW ARE WILLING TO PREDICT, HOWEVER, WHEN THE NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BE CONCLUDED. ONE DC LEADER (DONAT-CATTIN) HAS EVEN SUGGESTED THAT THE TALKS COULD WELL GO ON INTO JULY. IN ADDITION, THE SENATE'S UNEXPECTED DEFEAT OF THE ABORTION BILL ON JUNE 7 (SEE SEPTTEL) MAY HAVE

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EXACERBATED THE DIFFICULTIES OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT.

3. NEW DIFFICULTIES SEEM TO HAVE ARISEN EVEN IN AREAS WHERE A CONSENSUS (AT LEAST BETWEEN THE DC AND THE PCI) APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN REACHED. A TECHNICAL MEETING ON PUBLIC ORDER BETWEEN THE DC AND PCI ON JUNE 3 CONCLUDED WITH THE PCI ASSERTING THAT SERIOUS DIFFERENCES STILL EXISTED ON SUCH REPORTEDLY EARLIER RESOLVED PROBLEMS AS THE "PREVENTIVE DETENTION" BILL. PARLIAMENTARY EXPERTS OF THE TWO PARTIES MET AGAIN ON JUNE 8 TO TRY TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS OVER PREVENTIVE DETENTION,

WIRE TAPS, POLICE INTERROGATION, AND THE CLOSING OF SUBVERSIVE HIDE-OUTS. DIFFERENCES OVER THE POLICE REFORM LAW (DEMILITARIZATION AND UNIONIZATION)

REPROATEDLY REMAIN TOO GREAT TO FORM PART OF AN
EVENTUAL ACCORD. CGIL SECRETARY GENERAL LAMA'S
POLICY ADDRESS JUNE 6 TO THE RIMINI TRADE UNION
CONGRESS MAY ALSO HAVE AN IMPORTANT BEARING ON THE
SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE ECONOMIC
SECTOR.

4. THEE HAS BEEN NO FORMAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE
PARTIES ON HOW THE LEFT PARTIES' INSISTENCE ON
"POLITICAL GUARANTEES" FOR AN EVENTUAL PROGRAM ACCORD
MIGHT BE MET. THE DC HAS INSISTED ALL ALONG THAT
THIS SUBJECT BE DEFERRED UNTIL THE ELEMENTS OF AN
AGREEMENT HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATED. IN ANY CASE, THE
DC DELEGATION HAS NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS
IT. IT IS FIRMLY CONSTRAINED BY ITS DIRECTORATE
NOT TO ENGAGE IN ANY AGREEMENT THAT WOULD SIGNIFY
A CHANGE IN THE PRESENT "POLITICAL FRAMEWORK"--AN
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ARTFUL BIT OF ITALIAN PHRASING THAT BASICALLY DRAWS
THE LINE AT FORMAL PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT
MAJORITY.

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5. THE DC'S LINE IS FIRMLY SUPPORTED BY EVERYONE WHO COUNTS FOR ANYTHING IN THE PARTY. A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF NERVOUSNESS IS BEING FELT, HOWEVER, AS TO HOW THE POLITICAL IMPORT OF A PROGRAM ACCORD MAY BE MANIFESTED. DC LEADERS HAVE PUBLICLY STATED THAT ANY AGREEMENT OF COURSE HAS "POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE." THEY WOULD LIKE TO LET THINGS GO AT THAT. THEY ARE BEING PUSHED, HOWEVER, TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING MORE. SOME DC LEADERS, ANDREOTTI FOR ONE, HAVE RESURRECTED AN ORIGINALLY SOCIALIST IDEA (WHICH NOW APPEARS TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNISTS AS WELL) OF "REINFORCING" THE GOVERNMENT BY THE APPOINTMENT OF A FEW TECHNICIAN-MINISTERS WHO ARE CONSIDERED SYMPATHETIC BY THE LEFT. IN A JUNE 4 INTERVIEW WITH TURIN'S LA STAMPA, ANDREOTTI RECALLED THAT DEGASPERI HAD "REINFORCED" A DC MINORITY GOVERNMENT THIRTY YEARS AGO BY BRINGING IN A LIBERAL, EINAUDI.

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6. OTHERS IN THE DC, HAVING THEMSELVES ONCE SUGGESTED FOR INTERNAL REASONS THAT A CABINET SHUFFLE MIGHT BE USEFUL, NOW SEEM TO BE VERY WARY OF THE IDEA. THEY ORIGINALLY CONCEIVED OF THE STRATEGY AS A DEVICE TO UNBURDEN THE ANDREOTTI CABINET OF SOME OF THE LESS SUCCESSFUL (BONIFACIO) OR CONTROVERSIAL (MALFATTI) MINISTERS, REPLACING THEM WITH OTHER DC LEADERS (SUCH AS PICCOLI AND BARTOLOMEI WHOSE TERMS AS PARLIAMENTARY WHIPS EXPIRE IN JULY). THE REPLACEMENT OF SOME DC MINISTERS BY OTHER DC MINISTERS IS CLEARLY NO SUFFICIENT TO SATISFY THE LEFT. PSI LEADER CRAXI MADE THIS EXPLICIT OVER THE WEEKEND IN REJECTING AN ALL-DC SHUFFLE. BUT, WITHIN THE MORO-ZACCAGNINI CAMP, THE WHOLE IDEA OF A CABINET SHUFFLE (BESIDES OPENING UP THE PANDORA'S BOX OF FACTIONAL INFIGHTING FOR MINISTERIAL REPRESENTATION) IS ALSO INCREASINGLY REGARDED AS POLITICALLY DANGEROUS SINCE IT MIGHT REQUIRE A PARLIAMENTARY VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IF THE CHANGES ARE EXTENSIVE.

7. DESPITE THE DC'S INJUNCTION AGAINST DISCUSSING POSSIBLE POLITICAL FORMULAE UNTIL AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON THE SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF A PROGRAM ACCORD, IT IS DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPARATE THE TWO ELEMENTS. THE LEFT PARTIES ARE TALKING MORE AND MORE THESE DAYS OF THE NECESSITY FOR POLITICAL "GUARANTEE"--A SUBJECT THAT THE PCI, AT LEAST, HAD

DOWNPLAYED IN RECENT WEEKS. WHILE THE PCI'S CALL FOR
A POLITICAL SOLUTION WHICH WOULD ASSURE (IN PCI
SPOKESMAN DIGIULIO'S WORDS) THAT "AN EVENTUAL AGREEMENT
WOULD NOT REMAIN A PRUELY VERBAL ACTION" CONTINUES
TO BE COUCHED IN CAUTIOUS PHRASING, THE SOCIALISTS'
POSITION COULD NOT BE MORE DISQUIETINGLY BLUNT AND
HARSH. THE SPI CONTINUES TO PROCLAIM THE NECESSITY
OF DISSOLVING THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT (EVEN IF IT
WERE TO BE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER AND ONLY SLIGHTLY
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MODIFIED ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT) IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE
A CLEAR-CUT MODIFICATION OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION.
IN FACT, THE SOCIALISTS NO LONGER SEEM TO REGARD THE
INCLUSION OF TECHNICIAN-MINISTERS IN THE ANDREOTTI
CABINET AS SUFFICIENT; TODAY'S AVANTI REITERATES THE
PSI DEMAND FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT AND FORMATION OF A
MAJORITY WHICH WOULD INCLUDE THE PCI. IT IS INTERESTING
THAT, IN THIS REGARD, THE PCI HAS NOT INSISTED (AND
UNDOUBTEDLY REGARDS AS UNREALISTIC FOR NOW) ON JOINING
THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY. IN EXERTING PRESSURES ON THE PCI TO
RAISE ITS DEMANDS, THE EXTREMIST PSI POSITION
UNDOUBTEDLY COMPLICATES THE PROSPECTS FOR AN AGREEMENT,
AND IS ONLY MITIGATED BY CRAXI'S INSISTENCE (CONFIRMED
AT THE LAST PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE SESSION) THAT THE
PSI WILL NOT PROVOKE A GOVERNMENT CRISIS ON ITS
OWN. GARDNER

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